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LA PERCEPTION VISUELLE DE L'ESPACE. Par *B. Bourdon*, Professeur de Philosophie à l'Université de Rennes. Avec 143 Figures. Paris: Librairie C. Reinwald. 1902. Pages, 442.

A short sketch of the problem which Professor Bourdon has treated will be of value in determining the scope of his work. We are sensible by our organs of sight, of light and of colors on the one hand and of space, magnitudes, forms, position, movements, and depths on the other. The relative independence of these two groups of perception is easily shown; for the same forms continue to persist, whatever be the colors we impart to them; letters printed in blue retain the same shape as they would if they were printed in red. The perception of colors is retinal, which is not the case with the visual perception of space. This is produced by tactile, muscular, and articular sensations (coming mainly from the eyelids, the muscles of the eyes, the muscles which produce the movements of the head and the articulations concerned in these movements). Thus, when we fix our gaze upon an isolated point and perceive that it lies to our right, sensations other than those emanating from the retina must intervene in order to inform us of its position. For example, if the body and the head are at rest we must turn our eyes to the right to fixate this point, in which case determinate tactile and muscular sensations of the eyes must be produced. If the point afterwards passes to the left, and if we continue to fixate it, the image will not change its place upon the retina, but the tactile and muscular sensations will be modified, and will enable us to recognise that the point has passed to the right.

Now, it is to the study of such problems as the foregoing that Professor Bourdon's book is devoted. The book covers some four hundred pages and presents a comprehensive study of the visual perception of space. The author has endeavored to exhibit in a clear and simple manner the essential facts involved in this perception, to distinguish in the phenomena studied the part played by each cardinal species of sensations, and to fix this part quantitatively by numerous determinations. He has restricted himself almost entirely to fundamental points. His main thesis is that the perception of spatial depth by convergence is due to the sensations excited in the muscles of the eyes, and that the perception of positions to the right, to the left, above, and below, by means of changes in the direction of the gaze produced by simple movements of the eyes, is due to tactile sensations of the pupils. The author has drawn largely upon the work of the physiologists, like Hering, Helmholtz, Aubert, Volkmann, and Donders, and on that of psychological physicists like Mach. The book is well indexed and will serve admirably for orientation in the research of this field.

IL PENTIMENTO E LA MORALE ASCETICA. By *Zino Zini*. Torino: Fratelli Bocca, Editori. 1902. Pages, xii, 232. Price, L. 3.

The present volume, while devoted to a historical and comparative investigation of Christian and scientific ethics, is quite practical in its purpose. The author

avows that he has approached his subject in the impartial spirit of objective criticism and entirely without any preconceived notions. He believes that he has furnished ideas of value regarding the conflict of the old ascetic ethics with modern scientific ethics,—ideas, too, that are little known and that would be serviceable in the construction of a rational system of rules of conduct. There is a crying need, he says, of rescuing humanity from a system of ethics which is exclusively religious and which takes its origin neither in fundamental concepts nor in a scientific criticism of good and evil, and which is interpreted either in a traditional or ecclesiastical sense. Mankind must be furnished with a new system of ethical education, the foundations of which shall be reasoned convictions concerning the nature of good and evil, and the fruit of a broader and profounder knowledge of the causes and the laws controlling the actual moral facts. The author exhibits a wide acquaintance with both ecclesiastical and modern scientific literature.  $\mu$ .

A HISTORY OF POLITICAL THEORIES ANCIENT AND MEDIEVAL. By *William Archibald Dunning*, Ph. D., Professor of History in Columbia University. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1902. Pages, xv, 360. Price, \$2.50.

Professor Dunning attempts to supply in the present volume a decided want in the literature of political science, and in many respects he has admirably succeeded. There is no existing treatise which covers exactly the same ground. Scarcely any attention has been devoted either in England or America to the history of political theories, and one can point in these countries to no serious attempt "to trace out in origin and development the life of political ideas in the broad field of the world's progress." Blakey's *History of Political Literature* is characterised by Professor Dunning as "crude, scrappy, and superficial." Sir Frederick Pollock's *Introduction to the History of the Science of Politics*, while scholarly and adequate, is very brief. Surprising as it may be, not even in Germany, where the activity of scholars in all phases of historical research is enormous, does there exist a complete history of political theories. Mohl's useful work is little more than a classified bibliography of politics; Hildenbrand's excellent treatise was never completed, and the first volume reaches only to the close of classical antiquity. Bluntschli's solid production deals only with the period since the thirteenth century, and is devoted primarily to German literature; and lastly, Janet's "elaborate and most admirable work avowedly exhibits political theory in its relation to ethical doctrine."

Professor Dunning's aim, now, has been to be more comprehensive than Pollock, Bluntschli, and Hildenbrand, more systematic and accurate than Blakey, more historical and less bibliographical than Mohl, and, as contrasted with Janet, "to present rather an interpretation of the development of political theory in its relation to political fact." He has endeavored to trace through all antiquity and through the Middle Ages the history of all well-defined ideas "in reference to the origin, nature, and scope of the authority through which the relations of the mem-